

Ministerial Association
of SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS



J. L. McELHANY, CHAIRMAN
I. H. EVANS, SECRETARY
L. E. FROOM, ASSOCIATE
MEADE MACGUIRE, ASSOCIATE

TAKOMA PARK, WASHINGTON, D.C.

CABLE ADDRESS
"ADVENTIST" WASHINGTON

September 26, 1940.

TO A SMALL GROUP OF TEACHERS
INTERESTED IN THE 1844 PROBLEM.

Dear Associate in the Service:

During a certain afternoon meeting at the recent Bible Teachers' Council here in Washington, I was asked to set forth in condensed form the fundamental steps leading to the final "1844" time argument. The facts were presented in the form of some thirty-five consecutive points. Several asked that this progressive date be made available in mimeograph form. The material has now been checked over, and introductory and concluding paragraphs provided.

Believing this data, because of our common interest in the '44 problem, will be of interest and, I trust, of value, I am venturing to place a copy with you.

Truly yours in the present Truth,

L. E. Froom

LEF:N

THE 1844 MILLERITE TIME PROBLEM

Note: In the plan and provision of God, time is determined and recorded by planetary motion. It is marked off not merely by rotation of earth, but by progression of sun, earth and moon from one celestial position to another, until earth and moon accomplish a distinctive series of revolutions, which every 19 years end on the same day. From astronomical tables of these inter-related cycles, together with related recorded eclipses, a system of scientific time measurement is supplied pursuant to God's original fiat, "And let them [sun and moon] be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years." (Gen.1:14).

Thus, the great 2300-year prophetic period--with its 457 B.C. beginning, its 31 A.D. crucifixion-seal on Nisan 14 (luni-solar time), and its termination on Tisri 10, in 1844--is definitely based upon this celestial time measure that God gave to man by which to tell off the prophetic years of this greatest of all time prophecies. This "grand line of time," as it has been called, embraces both prophecied day, month and year of death of Passover Lamb of God, and also day, month and year of His entry, as ascended High Priest, not only upon initial phase of His ministry in heaven alone, but upon final phase of His ministry in Most Holy place of heavenly sanctuary. Is therefore pre-eminent sanctuary prophecy.

Three prime factors are involved in its time calculation: First, our giant solar system--centering about the sun (which has a diameter of over 860,000 miles), together with its encircling planets and all their attendant satellites, each in its own peculiar orbit--moves in its entirety majestically and harmoniously through boundless space. Next, our earth, with a diameter of about 7900 miles, is circling about the sun at a velocity of 9840 miles per hour in a vast elliptical orbit of some 600 million miles or more. And, finally, our moon, over 2000 miles in diameter, is revolving about the earth in its own elliptical orbit of approximately 1,500,000 miles, at an average velocity of 2288 miles per hour--coursing in serpentine fashion up and down the Zodiac belt, and annually describing a path even greater than the earth's circuit. These three celestial bodies--sun, moon, and earth--are the 3 determining factors in luni-solar calculation of time. Their diverse motions are in perfect harmony, and synchronize with precision. Such is the astronomical setting of the 1844 time problem.

I. Jewish Calendar Problems Confronting Miller's Early Calculation of Prophecy

1. Rabbinical perversion of Jewish time (under Hillel II, c. 360 A.D.), had resulted in fixed, artificial calendar tied to vernal equinox, which meant abandonment of former Mosaic basis of reckoning. Result: Nisan feasts, calling for ripened barley wave sheaf, were thrown back into "latter rain" period, usually one moon too early.
2. Karaite medieval protest (8th to 10th century) had revived Mosaic calendar. Result: ~~In this important sector of Jewry, Nisan was~~ restored for a number of centuries to original barley harvest position in April-May, properly following latter rain of March.
3. Miller first adopted the common Rabbinical calendar for calculating prophetic periods, based upon the equinoxes. Note: It is essential constantly to remember that one cannot have a date without a calendar, unless event is marked by position of sun and moon.

4. Miller likewise adopted Ferguson's Rabbinical April 3, 33 A.D. tentative crucifixion date. But this was based on Jewish calendar introduced three centuries after cross, premised on 1st full moon after vernal equinox, and so contravening "midst of week" specification of prophecy. (Incidentally, April 3, in 33 A.D. was not true date for paschal moon in that year, which came one moon later because of intercalated leap month that spring.)
5. Miller ended 70 weeks with cross in spring of 33, and added 1810 years to locate end of "Jewish year 1843," terminating it in spring of civil year 1844, with limits at the equinoxes--from Mar. 21, 1843, to Mar. 21, 1844.
6. Because of opposition, associates forced to study calendar question thoroughly, which led them to definitely reject the Rabbanite and accept the Karaite-Mosaic calendar.
7. Associates then shifted cross from mistaken end of week in 33 back to rightful "midst of week" in 31, and concluded that if midst ended in spring, end of week must terminate in autumn, six months later than spring. This was startling concept underlying corrected dating of 7th month movement that superseded earlier general "1843" phase.
8. Types were likewise seen to indicate autumnal 7th month for Day of Atonement.
9. Midnight cry parable similarly projected a "point of time"--"at midnight" when true cry began--"midway" between spring Disappointment and autumnal ending, 6 months later.
10. Thus succession of structural dates of 2300-year outline prophecy--457, 27-31-34, and 1844--was first established from Scripture argument.
11. April 18 ending of "Jewish sacred year 1843" established prior to terminus of Miller's original Mar. 21, 1844, terminal date.

II. Steps Leading to Ultimate Selection of October 22

1. Proper correlation of Jewish sacred year (extending from spring to spring) and common civil year (winter to winter) understood, together with relationship of month, and day--Jewish day beginning at sunset prior to midnight--beginning of civil day, but carrying calendar date of next civil day beginning at midnight, and having largest period in common.
2. Same calendation necessary for unity and continuity of the 3 widely-separated key epochs of the 2300-year prophecy, embracing 457 B.C., 31 A.D., and 1844 dates respectively.
3. Recognition of principle that a prophetic year is always a solar (common or natural) year in fulfilment. (Jewish year does not have 360 days. "360"-day year is prophetic symbol only. Ancient Jewish common year had 354/355 days, and leap years 383/384 days.)
4. Jewish month is lunar, while year is luni-solar--kept in alignment with solar year by regular intercalation of leap years.

5. New moon begins new month, usually counted from 2nd or horned crescent, i.e., an older shape of moon, not 1st phasis. (Jews did not usually take earliest appearance.)
6. Jewish sacred year inseparably tied to agricultural year, with 3 harvests--barley, wheat and vintage, coming in 1st, 3rd and 7th months respectively.
7. Barley harvest moon always begins year. So Passover and wave sheaf come in ripened barley period. Nisan called "ear moon," or "new fruits," with sickle as the sign. (Just as many years as barley harvests --no more, no less.)
8. Barley ripe in April (See Josephus: Nisan is April; also Jahn, Buhle, Michaelis.)
9. Intercalation adjusts lunar to solar year. (19-year cycle has 7 leap years, and comprises exactly 235 lunations, each recurring cycle having identical sequence of 12 common and 7 leap years, and with identical component months.)
10. Historical development of calendation as follows: (a) originally confined to observation; (b) later, in time of Christ, observation blended with calculation; (c) finally calculation checked with observation records as in 1844.
11. Month begins when "horned moon" observable. (If not able to be seen, reckoned from previous moon.)
12. Variable translation period [conjunction to phasis], one to four days according to fixed laws governing moon's motion [Geminus].

Note: Alternate sequence of 30 and 29 days for length of lunar month contingent upon constantly varying position of new moon in relation to calendar. Moon's change fluctuates between 26th and 29th days of lunar month. When conjunction occurs early, translation period is long; when late, period is short. This slowly oscillating position of conjunction, month by month, is accompanied by corresponding alternation of moon's first appearance between 29th and 30th day. Seeming irregularity is in regular progression.

13. In Karaite calendation, translation period (time of invisibility following conjunction) cannot be less than 22 hours. Conjunction and phasis rarely on same civil day.
14. Time of moon's 1st appearance dependent upon 3 main factors: (a) acceleration or rate of motion (perigee or apogee); (b) declination, or true latitude (position north or south of celestial equator); and (c) sign of Zodiac (or time of year).
15. Moon's motion, though variable, not erratic, but regular and repetitive in that variation. Her future timing can be forecast with exactness by competent computers, and her behavior in past calculated with

equal precision. On this basis all almanacs computed. Each 19-year cycle of sun and moon, influenced by other celestial bodies, sees a repetition of their courses, with each requisite leap month in precisely same chronological place.

16. Nisan 1 controls all subsequent feast dates.
17. Months of feast period (7 months from Nisan to Tisri), invariably alternate--30 and 29 days. (Adjustment of any variation in length of year made in last 5 months.)
18. April conjunction in 1844, occurred on April 17 11^h 49^m (Boston Civil Time). [Note: The indicated hours and minutes pertain to the day itself, and do not indicate entry into next calendar date.)
19. Length of each year fixed by interval between Passovers [full moon dates secured from British Nautical Almanac] which in turn controls length of each lunar. Adjustments made in Heshvan (8th) and Kisleu (9th).
20. In 1844, Nisan new moon couldn't appear at 1st sunset after conjunction on Apr. 17, for period was too short. (Less than 7 hours.)
21. Couldn't exceed 2nd sunset, because length of year (355 days, from pass-over in 1844 to passover in 1845) forbade altering length of any months, other than Heshvan, 8th month.) Therefore Nisan 1 equalled Apr. 19.
22. Nisan 14, for "1844," must consequently be May 2 (within barley season's limits of Apr. 8 to May 6), and not Apr. 3, as Rabbanites celebrated it--falling within "latter rain" period.)
23. Just 6 lunar months, or 177 days, from Nisan 1 (Apr. 19) to and including Tisri 1 (Oct. 13)--that is, 6 x 29- 1/2 days.
24. As October 13 = Tisri 1, so October 22 = Tisri 10--adding 9 to Tisri 1.
25. Just 173 days from Passover on May 2 (Nisan 14) to and including Tisri 10 (Oct. 22).
26. Tisri's adjacent months (6 and 8, or Elul and Heshvan, respectively) fix bounds for 7th month, Tisri.
27. Same argument as in points 19 and 20 [too short a time between conjunction and sunset], applies to Elul's and Heshvan's translation periods--between whose limits, fixed by moon's position, Tisri 1 had an unalterable position. Months belonging to Jewish feast period never changed in length.
28. Series of 8 unbroken synchronisms (calendrical and astronomical) fix limits of Tisri in entire series of feast months of "1844"--there being a gradual shifting of moon from apogee to perigee, from north latitude to south, and from spring sign to autumnal sign during the period.

Apr	11
May	31
June	30
July	31
Aug	31
Sept	30
Oct	31
Nov	30
Dec	31
Jan	31
Feb	28
Mar	31
Apr	9

III. Summary of Evidence, and Resultant Conclusions

1. Exactness of Luni-Solar Calendar.-- Because of variable date of Jewish new year--sometimes in March, then again in April--conclusion superficially reached by some that one cannot tell within a month just when Mosaic passover occurred. Such expressions as "usually" and "generally," frequently used in describing moon's motion, and allusion to her variable translation period of 1-4 days, have tended to increase existant uncertainty of some in regard to ancient Jewish calendation. But, although moon's motion is variable, and her place in sky always changing, yet, in every nineteen years, she always goes around the earth 235 times, while earth revolves around sun exactly 19 times, with both series of revolutions ending on precisely same day. Moon's behavior throughout these cycles in exact conformity to law and progression, and always ascertainable. In this manner, and of each series of lunations checks with every 19th solar year, and results in exact form of luni-solar calendar, which marks out with precision important variations of moon, and her position at all times in relation to Jewish festivals.
2. Method of Ascertaining Day of Atonement.-- Exactness by which Millerites chose their dates was simple, yet phenomenal. Were aided by almanacs and computers of their own time. Moon not actually or visually "observed," in 1844, so far as any record states; but, under lead of such responsible calendar men as David young, Bliss, Hale, Bates, Flavell, etc., having found April conjunction, they determined 1st day of Nisan, and from it reckoned 1st day of Tisri to be 177 days hence. This ultimate calculation was presented as early as July, 1844, although, earlier in that year, sunset phasis on April 18 was reckoned as beginning of Mosaic 1st month, Nisan. Crucifixion date was main support of chronological ending of 2300-year prophecy. Today, nearly a century later, principles governing recorded motions of sun, moon and earth confirm accuracy and validity of this computation of beginning, intermediate and closing dates.
3. Phenomenal Accuracy of Specified Date.-- Astonishing Millerite conclusion that October 22, 1844, was civil equivalent of Tisri 10--terminus of 2300th year of Daniel's grand line of time--climaxing with cleansing of sanctuary--stands unimpeached and unimpeachable. Based upon revival of Mosaic calendar that God gave His ancient people at Exodus, and that was operative in time of Ezra and Nehemiah at beginning of 2300-year period--as well as at time of cross that sealed and certified initial section of great prophecy cut off for Jews--Millerite conclusion reached was unassailable.

Mosaic calendar, based upon astronomical laws of planetary motion which God set into operation "in the beginning," formed scientific basis of sacred feast calendar committed to Moses at time of Exode. Astronomical science with its mathematically exact moon tables, spanning prophecy from beginning to end, attests and certifies soundness and validity of Millerite conclusions. So long as time shall last, yes, on into eons of eternity, will ever remain an unchangeable fact that, on basis of true calendation and demonstrable science, time of antitypical Day

of Atonement began on October 22, 1844--a fact that can no more be changed than that Christ began His mediatorial work in the heavenly sanctuary at Pentecost, fifty days after His ascension.

The farther time recedes from the climatic October 22 date of 7th month movement in "1844," the more remarkable and daring that revolutionary stand is seen to be--flouting as it did combined traditional positions of nominal Christian churches and centuries-old calendrical practice of Jews. Can only be likened to last stand of present world message of 3rd angel, regarding Sabbath, in face of a united and hostile Christendom--Protestant and Catholic--that confronts this people. And our stand is tied to, and is inseparable from 7th month time position of 1844.

4. Integrity of Sanctuary Prophecy Tied to 1844 Time Position.-- Seventh month movement position was a stand, moreover, that this last message must maintain, defend and proclaim in face of same Christian and Jewish hostility as of yore toward time set in 1844. Very integrity of our sanctuary position, so far as chronological foundation of 2300 years is concerned, stands or falls upon this issue. If 1844 Adventists were mistaken in 7th month time calculations, then Millerite movement was built upon colossal chronological mistake and is unworthy of our support. Then, also, their error in expectation would not simply be misunderstanding of event to take place in 1844, but of very foundations of prophecy underlying sanctuary question.

Can be no compromise upon this issue. We must either uphold or repudiate the 1844 calculation. We must believe in and defend it, or else expose and denounce it. Integrity of Spirit of prophecy endorsement of this time argument also involved in issue. We cannot believe truth of beginning of judgment hour with that epochal day, and at same time disbelieve chronological and calendrical basis upon which it is founded. Is therefore a life and death question with us. Constitutes "main pillar," "leading landmark," preeminent foundation stone of the faith. So the very integrity of this movement is tied up with the verity of the October 22 position. And the propriety, accuracy, and validity of that position is now established beyond refutation.

LeRoy Edwin Froom